

I wanted to know more about what Frère Jaques said
I wanted to know more about what Frère Jaques said to
the cardinal
I wanted to know more about the cricket in the bush

I wanted to know more about what the cricket said
I wanted to know more about the light of the silvery moon
I wanted to know more about those little white lies

I wanted to know more about a fair day
I wanted to know more about a fair night
I wanted to know more about the tickets to the fair

-- Alfred Starr Hamilton

Montclair NJ

THE JOB INTERVIEW

You go to apply for a job that will have you dancing
naked in a cocktail lounge. Men and women will stare
at you
in a kind of sullen excitement. You imagine them looking,
the way they will squirm in their seats, the way they
will grip their drinks.

You report for the job interview early in the morning.
They ask you your name, your previous experience, and
where you graduated from high school. When they don't
like the sound
of any of your answers, they slap you across the face.

"Have you ever visited Asia?" "No." They give you a
slap.
"Are your children old enough to vote?" "No." Another
slap.
"Did you ever have sex with your father?" "Many times."
A slap.
You give them the names of everyone you have ever slept
with.

You're not happy about the way this interview is going.
The questions about car crashes you messed up completely.
They light up cigars the size of Roman candles. The
smoke
smells like burning money, a smell you remember from
childhood.

They flick their ashes on your clothes. They ask you
why you want to

quit your present job as a long-distance operator.
You tell them that you want more exposure, not mentioning
that
just standing in lighted windows at night is no longer
enough.

You don't tell them about the restroom incident, or
what you
like to do at the public library, between the rows of
books.
When you told your mother that you were getting a job in
show
business, you didn't say that you would have to show
everything.

"You realize that this club is run by organized crime,"
they
tell you. To this you know you have the right response:
"Organized
or not," you say, "we're all criminals underneath our
clothes."
You remember your deep religious training and convictions.

You've always been fond of the doctrine of original sin.
They look at each other without saying anything else.
You unzip your jeans, and slide them down to show your
perfect thighs.
You feel alright now. "O.K., kid," they say, "show us
what you've got."

TO A SERIOUS EDITOR

I want to disappoint you. I don't mean that I want to,
but I probably will. If you are looking for what
they call
the "well-crafted poem," then I know I will disappoint
you.

I am a poet of the cheap effect and the dirty joke,
the elbow in the ribs and the slap on the ass. If
you are
a woman, then I would rather be squeezing your tits
than
writing this. If you are a man, I would rather be
sitting
with you in a downtown bar, watching a topless dancer.

But here I am, and if you think the things I'm saying
are stupid,
that's your problem, not mine. I know there are a lot
of mistakes
in my poems. But don't wait around for me to fix
them up.